



American Government  
Ms. Edwards  
Bedwards@RSU10.org  
East Campus  
Room 21  
Course Expectations 2009-2010

### Course Overview

All students are required to study Geography and Research and Methods at the 9<sup>th</sup> grade level, World History at the 10<sup>th</sup> grade level, United States History at the 11<sup>th</sup> grade level and United States Government in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Class size in Government and Politics usually has 15-20 students. The school is on a blocked schedule and classes meet every other day.

The U.S. Government program is designed to teach U.S. Constitutional government based on principles of philosophy, political beliefs and behavior, political parties and interest groups, national institutions and policy processes, and law. Emphasis is given to the relationship of the citizen to the structure and function of the American constitutional system.

This course is designed to enable students to develop a critical perspective of government and politics in the United States. The nature of the American political system, its development over the past two centuries, and how it works today are examined.

### Possible Topics to Be Examined

- A. Constitutional Underpinnings
- B. Political Beliefs and Behavior
- C. Political Parties, Interest Groups and Mass Media
- D. Public Policy
- E. Institutions of National Government: Congress, Presidency, Bureaucracy, and Federal Courts
- F. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

### Grading

Homework/Bell Activities	= 20%
Quizzes/Papers	= 25%
Test/Projects	= 35%
Current Events	= 20%

## Assignment Descriptions

### Homework

Expect daily homework. Homework will vary. It could consist of reading the chapter or supplement materials, research, preparing for a debate or simulations, writing assignments, and monitoring the media. It is an expectation that all work will be completed. No late homework will be accepted.

### The Notebook and Classroom Folder

Students are required to keep a notebook for the class. In the notebook students will put their class notes. Students will be provided with a classroom folder. In this folder will be all the work completed for the class. Students can take the work home with them after the quarter is over.

### Quizzes

At the completion of each chapter students will be assessed through a quiz. Students will be allowed to use vocabulary worksheets on their quizzes.

### Projects

Throughout the year students will be assigned to complete a project over a topic being studied.

### Test

At the end of each unit there will be a test. Study guides will be provided for all test.

### Debates, Simulations, and Participation:

Students will be required to engage in several debates and simulations both formal and informal. Discussion will be a major focus of the class, so it will be an expectation that students be equipped daily to add thoughtful analysis within our discussion.

### Current Events

Students have two current events that are due by the Friday of every week.

## Classroom Procedures and Rules

### Absences, Tardies and Makeup work:

If you arrive in class after the "bell" you will be marked as tardy. Excessive tardiness will result in your spending 30 minutes in detention for each tardy over 3. See your student handbook for more details. First period tardiness means you must go to the office for a tardy slip.

If you are absent from class, make sure you check the folder for missing work. More than five absences from class must be reported to the office. Immediately following an absence, please take the time to see what assignments and handouts you have missed. Handouts that you have missed will be available but you must request them to be 100% sure that you receive them.

It is your responsibility to make up any missing assignments due to absence. If you receive unsolicited help on missing work, consider it a luxury and please do not expect it every time you are gone.

Assignments given in your absence are the only ones which will receive any deadline adjustment (and then only as needed). Long-term assignments will not be automatically adjusted except in extreme circumstances. Always check with your teachers to see what you missed when you were gone.

### General Guidelines:

Class time has a different meaning for each person in the room. Please respect each person in the room with your own behavior. Everyone has the right to receive the instruction given, therefore if you are disruptive in the class you are violating the rights of others. You will be given reminders verbally if your behavior begins to infringe on others.

One or two friendly reminders is the limit. Three reminders (also known by some as "three strikes and you're out") will lead to removal from the room and automatic detention for bothering the assistant principal.

Outright rude or otherwise uncivilized behavior will not be tolerated and may cause earlier removal. You will be removed from the room if you cannot conduct yourself well. Detention is again automatic if you must be sent to the office. If you are not able to behave respectfully in the workplace, you get fired. Think about it.

# Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is essential to the learning process. The student, teacher, and parent/guardian agree that when a student participates in a class, they are making an unspoken promise to maintain academic honesty throughout the school year and beyond. Any failure to fulfill this promise, through cheating copying, plagiarism, or any other commonly accepted form of academic dishonesty will result in the student receiving no credit for the assignment, test, or quiz in question. It must be understood that academic plagiarism is defined as the intentional or unintentional use of the ideas, thoughts or writings of another without an attempt to give credit to the source.

## Recipes For Success

- You are responsible for knowing the information provided in your textbook regardless of whether or not we have discussed it in class.
- Review your notes weekly
- Keep up on current events
- Be aware of the “basics” - memorize important Supreme Court cases, federal laws, and vocabulary.
- Stay organized
- Be conscience of the writing assignments and the requirements for each.
- Do the homework
- Summarize the chapters and maintain the vocabulary lists in the text.
- Participate in class discussions.
- After a test or quiz, write out the questions you missed with the correct answers.
- Make flashcards
- Know the basic structure of the Constitution, as well as the Amendments.
- Pay attention to lecture, and take good notes.
- Form study groups
- Manage your time wisely